

(c) The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India had sanctioned an amount of Rs. 740.67 lakhs in 2004-2005 for the development of Buddhist Circuit in Orissa for development of facilities at Langudi and other Buddhist places. The Department of Culture, Government of Orissa has also taken up an integrated action plan for this purpose.

Digitization of archives

751. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Ministry of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has embarked on digitization of its archives;

(b) if so, the details of the exercise, estimated expenditure thereon and sources of funds for the purpose and time-frame for completion of the project;

(c) whether ASI, has entrusted the digitization job to the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS), Gurgaon, Haryana, which is funded jointly by certain Government and private agencies of the US;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether a Parliamentary Committee had advised exercising caution in the matter of entrusting of works of such nature to AIIS; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and Centre's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Archaeological Survey of India has decided to digitize its photo-archives and rare books in the archaeological library. The total expenditure on this exercise has not been estimated. This work would be taken up in phases depending on the availability of funds.

(c) and (d) Considering the expertise and experience of the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) in the specific field, the digitization and classification of 10,000 photo negatives was entrusted to them as a pilot project which has been completed.

(e) and (f) The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Culture in a questionnaire addressed to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on demands for grants sought the information on the role of the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) in the digitization of museum objects in the proposed National Mission on Antiquities and Monuments. The Parliamentary Standing Committee was informed that no decision was taken in this regard and that the Ministry was considering to take up a pilot project for which the AIIS has indicated the cost. The Committee was also informed that the ASI would prepare the estimates and compare the estimates with other eligible parties before the project is taken up.

Development of historical monuments in Uttar Pradesh

752. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India gets meagre funds from the Central Government for the proper maintenance and development of historical monuments in the country, most particularly in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details of the funds provided to ASI during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(c) what steps are being taken/proposed to be taken by Government to provide adequate funds for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Considering the enormity of the task of conservation, maintenance and development work of protected heritage sites and monuments in the country, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) requires more funds.

(b) The details of funds provided to the ASI during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise for conservation, preservation and environmental development are at Statement (See below).

(c) While submitting requirements for 11th five year plan, need based requirement of funds for the ASI has been projected. In addition, possibility of augmenting the resources of ASI through public-private participation is being explored.